

Review

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT

OF THE

The Hahnemann Medical College,

OF PHILADELPHIA.

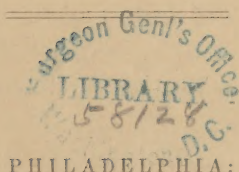
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*Presented by
F. L. Bradford*

AT THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC

Box

BY PROF. C. G. RAUE, M. D.



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VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN !

GENTLEMEN OF THE GRADUATING CLASS !

"There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at its flood, leads on to fortune."

With many it seems to be considered a fortune, to gain money, and with some this object seems to be the preëminent motive of all their exertions. Gentlemen, I do not propose to make use of the word "fortune" in this vulgar sense; especially to-day, when it is my pleasant duty to say a few parting words to you.

There is a higher aim in a Physician's life,—than money-making, and there is a greater fortune to which man may attain, than gold; and I shall try, on this occasion, to inspire you with loftier ideas of your profession,—and of what you have been successfully striving for in the past years by hard and arduous work,—than merely as means of accumulating wealth.

Look at this edifice! It was once a mere heap of stones and timber; aye, the stones themselves were once a molten liquid, and the timber was developed out of fluids; and once, they all may have existed in the form of gas. From the firm and fixed, we are referred back to the fluid and mobile; and wherever a something has gained form and shape, it has done so by means of mobile elements. Thus the timber grew, and thus the blocks of stone solidified; and then by means of human ingenuity, they were fitted and constructed into an edifice. And here again in this fitting process we recognize the mobile elements as the forming means. For the timber had to be cut, and the stones to be chiseled; it all took bodily labor—*force*, applied to shape the shapeless and to move the resting;—*force*, those mobile elements which are continually changing from heat into moving power. Wherever we find life, wherever we find mechanical changes in nature, wherever anything is produced by art or mechanism, it is accomplished by means of mobile elements. They are the necessary condition, the means of all the changes, transmutations, and growths in the corporeal world. But yet they are not the *cause*. Above the mobile elements stands the moving *spirit*; hidden and unseen, directs the *idea*, these forces into an harmonious action. Into the Chaos is brought purpose; and in the darkness sounds the word of God: "Let there be light!" The heap of stones and timber is gradually modeled and fitted, and by degrees arises before our eyes, more or less perfect, what had heretofore existed only in the idea, unseen and incorporeal. The idea thus shapes blocks of stone, models timber and iron; levels mountains, spans

the ocean and governs the world. I would rather, then, make use of the word *fortune*, as signifying a gain of ideas; for knowing is strength, knowledge is power!

Let us dwell for a moment upon this point. There was a time, not long since,—for in the life of nations a hundred years count but as days—that the heart of men quaked with fear when dark clouds were rolling on the sky, and spake with thunder and flashed with lightning. There lived, also, at one time, in this city, a man who went out in the storm to fly his kites on wire thread, and thus discovered the identity of lightning with electricity, whereby he was enabled to invent the lightning rod, under the protecting power of which we now sit, quietly listening to the majestic peals from the clouds and watching their lightning leaps. It is but a short time since the sound of the fire-bell startled a whole community into the liveliest emotion, and now, since steam has become our potent servant, we scarcely look out of the window upon such an occasion. Gentlemen, *knowledge is power!*

But let us consider those things, which most nearly concern us. About fifty years ago there arose in the East Indies a dreadful malady which mowed down a human crop with merciless rapidity. This was the Asiatic Cholera. It appeared some twelve years later in Europe. The science of Therapeutics of that day was entirely destitute of means to stay this fearful plague. Then Homœopathy was yet in its infancy; and although its founder had already proclaimed the three main remedies to be used against it,—Camphora, Veratrum and Cuprum—yet but few took heed of this new discovery. Now look at the results which are pro-

claimed by the statistics of later epidemics, when the law of *similia similibus* had gained a stronger foothold, and you will observe a most striking change. Or read the accounts of the ravages which yellow fever has made in the south, and how helpless, nay even injurious, has the old school treatment proved itself to be, from the first to the last of these epidemics; and then compare the results of Homœopathy in the same epidemics, and you will surely say with me, *that knowledge is power!* Do you know what still fills the mother's heart with fear and trembling when one of her darlings is taken with sore throat, fever, headache and vomiting? It is the dread of scarlet fever. Aye, and a fearful visitor it has been in many a family, and a destroyer of health for life, or of life itself! I hope, gentlemen, you will help to lessen this fear from year to year, by the successful application of the knowledge you have acquired, by demonstrating in your practice that only exceptional cases prove fatal;—cases which seem doomed from the first start. But let me break off here, lest it might seem, as though I were boasting of Homœopathy; it needs no boasting. My object is merely to show, that we have gained a power over disease heretofore unknown; and that this power is *knowledge*. But we are not at the top of the ladder yet; we have just fairly commenced climbing. And how many more steps have we to climb? Gentlemen, that ladder, upon the first rounds of which you have just put your feet, and for which meritorious act you will to-day receive your credentials, that ladder, as far as I can see, reaches with its top far into the coming centuries! Do not be afraid; do not get dizzy! Climb on! for it stands firmly, and is well founded upon

an immovable rock: it is based upon the law of *similia similibus*!

In Hotels of the latest style we find a very laudable arrangement, especially for invalids with weak lungs and legs; and which is also exceedingly satisfactory to lazy people. I mean the hoisting apparatus; or, more elegantly speaking, the Elevator. You sit there apparently in a snug little room, have leisurely crossed your legs one upon the other and before you think of a great many things,—ting! there you are, landed upon the second floor! Is that climbing? no, that is being hoisted! or elegantly expressed,—it is being elevated into a higher story without straining a muscle.

We have also a kind of elevators in our sciences; excellent contrivances of modern times;—our periodicals and journals, by which a man likewise can keep himself posted in the new events of scientific researches; can rise into the higher stories of better information without much trouble, if he be not too lazy to sit down in his leisure hours to *read* these journals. Is this climbing? no, that is being hoisted; or, more elegantly expressed, it is being elevated to a higher stand-point, by the labor of others. And indeed, if one's mental elasticity and aspiration should lack in energy to stride on by himself, we hope and wish and expect that every man in this nineteenth century, who has anything to do with sciences, should at least sit down and allow himself *to be hoisted*. But, Gentlemen, I wish, you would *climb*! That is altogether a different process. For we cannot really call that our own, which we have not acquired by our own strenuous efforts. What we gain so easily, by mere reading, remains as alluvial land, destitute of rocky

formations, an inorganic accumulation ; but possesses no organic growth. It may *swell*, but does not yield blood, sinews and bones. You must digest ; you must, by your own experiments test what others have done ; and finally bring forth the fruit of your own labor which others may enjoy.

I think, Gentlemen, your teachers have done what they could, to prepare and incline your minds for such self-growing action. They do not expect that you have learned by heart everything which medical science has already brought to light ; they have not intended to stuff you with facts and theories, either their own or others ; but they have tried to make you *understand* facts and theories ; to set you thinking of the why and wherefore of things ; to inspire you with a love of our glorious science ; in short, they have tried to put you on the right track, upon which, they hope, you will move by your own steam ; and become men of independent thought and judgment, self-thinking, self-producing ! climb on then ! It will give you more delight, more satisfaction, and more internal hold, than all the other things you can obtain. And this is the kind of fortune, on to which, I hope, the tide of your lives may carry you. May you take it at the flood ! And what was it that stimulated the founder of Homœopathy, to the toilsome work of his long life ? This love for science ! What is it that still inspires the best men of our cause with self-sacrificing activity ? *This* love for science ! Now, Gentlemen, although we cannot all be kings of science,—that title is already losing ground even in politics,—we can at least, each of us, be active citizens of the greatest and truest republic that ever existed, or ever will exist : the Republic of Science.

Climb on then, and bring your provings of new and old remedies; haul in your observations, either confirming old experiences, or elucidating new principles; bring forth your experimental researches and discoveries; remember always, that to-day you have been made members of a Society in which neither money nor family is a sign of excellence, in which you can attain distinction only by your own exertions and meritorious efforts!

In Cologne there is a dome, the construction of which was conceived about the year 1248, and in the completion of which are still engaged thousands of busy hands. A still higher and nobler thought was conceived some seventy years ago, in Leipzig, by Hahnemann, and you, Gentlemen, have enlisted to be the propounders of this thought, to spread it wherever you go, and to bring its blessings home to the very threshold of each family. This leads me to another point which I yet have to impress upon your minds. You know there are diseases which are called *contagious*. And indeed, when I was pondering about what I should speak to you in my farewell address, I felt a strong inclination to give you a lecture on *contagion*; meaning by that, all that is *catching*. For not only are the pestilential and miasmatic corporeal elements by which disease is propagated, and those bad moral influences, by which many a promising young man has been infected and brought to ruin, catching; but also the soothing elements of corporeal agencies and the still deeper acting mental influences by which at last and through which alone the world progresses. Let us try to get an insight into this mysterious influence of mental infection. The *fact* is known well enough. Children imitate what grown persons do in their presence; big children imitate

what they see others do, as is conspicuously shown by the route which fashion makes every year through whole nations like an epidemic; a leading mind may carry a whole people even into revolution, if the necessary disposition exists in such people to such excitation, and the commander of an army can inspire his troops to bold deeds by his mere presence or a few words. It is all entirely analogous to the infecting influence of contagious disease. Seemingly little, infinitesimal, it may be, at the start, yet an element of its own kind, well developed and well defined, it sets other and similar elements into motion, to partake of a similar character and tendency. There are thus two things required for a successful operation of what we call contagion, *one* which gives the start, and transfers its own peculiarities to *another*, and this other assimilates the first on account of the similarity which exists between them; precisely as there are two persons required for a good joke: namely, one who makes it, and another who understands it. I might go still further into particulars. It is a fundamental process in the human mind, that mobile elements are constantly flowing from mental modifications to mental modifications according to certain laws, and thus cause the continual flow of our thoughts, their rising into consciousness and their falling into delitescence. As an illustration of this fact, I may call your attention to an observation which you all have made. On receiving a letter and reading it, you will find that not only those ideas which the letter contains, spring up into consciousness, but also others, which had previously been in more or less intimate connection with them. That letter may cause a train of thoughts, which might occupy the mind for a long time.

Or, what is perhaps a still better illustration, suppose you read in the paper: "John Smith died on the 2d of March." If this John Smith was a relative or an old friend of yours, how quickly will these few words stir up a number of other mental modifications, which a moment before had all lain in deep unconsciousness. You will at once be transported back into the days of your childhood when, as boys, you were playing together; before your mind's eye will rise at once the many happy hours you enjoyed together, and may be, also the many sad experiences which you have had together! whilst, if you do not know this John Smith, the excitation into consciousness will hardly surpass the boundaries of the simple fact, that a certain John Smith died on the second of March, and will leave you as cool as though you had not read it. Why is this so? Because, in the first case, the name John Smith is so closely interwoven with so many mental modifications of your own, that the mere mentioning of it causes at once a resuscitation of these various modifications, and the fact that this John Smith, whom you knew and loved so well, died, makes the excitation still deeper and wider. Now, Gentlemen, this simple illustration explains fully the process of mental infection. We see, how mobile elements from without, spread rapidly from point to point, and excite into consciousness all the similar elements within, until the whole soul is in a state of excitement, which leaves no room for us, to think of or care for anything else. We are, then, if this excitation is deep enough, that is, if the external elements find a large number of similar modifications within, or in the words of common language, if our interest is deeply excited,—un-

der the entire influence of such excitation, and we have to follow its impulses until other excitations calm it down again. This is the nature of mental infection. It does, therefore, not take place, where external influences find no corresponding elements within, to excite them into consciousness. And the same illustration may reveal to you, also, the whole secret, why new truths and new discoveries so slowly gain the acknowledgment of a majority of the people. It is not enough that people are *told* of such a truth—What do they care about John Smith whom they do not know?—They have to be made personal friends of such a truth; they are to be made to feel its beneficial influence upon their own welfare; they must learn to admire its beauty and grandeur, and must thus gradually grow identified with the same. And indeed, this can not be accomplished in a day. It requires steady workers, indefatigable laborers to disseminate such truths; not mere talking, but doing. As only by unceasing efforts can any work of magnitude be accomplished,—so each new truth requires patient and persistent efforts to bring it near to the minds of the people; the more so, as its dimensions are grander and as its influence in the future is to be deeper and more pervading. This is applicable to all great discoveries. Why should Homœopathy form an exception?—It was in the year 1833, as I may well say, that Homœopathy was born in in this country, in this very city. We may just as well be proud of *this* fact, as we are of the fact, that the Declaration of Independence was made in our City Hall. Both events, although little at their beginning were, nevertheless, living babies, and they live to this day, both pretty smart young people; the one a little older

than the other, for you must allow, as I have said before, that in the life of nations, a hundred years count but as days. But at first they were babies indeed. The one was a mighty strong boy; even tremendous blood-letting could not get him under the ground. The other I rather like to assign to the fair sex. She was a fair girl-baby, abhorring all harsh, inhuman treatment. By her gentle influence she has saved as much blood, as the older companion had to lose. I may well call her a girl-baby, because she belongs to science; and science is derived from *scientia*,—denoting a womanly being. They both cut their teeth. The boy after seven years hard struggle, had his full set. With the girl the teething process took place in the following manner. She cut her incisors in the year 1834, when at Allentown, the first attempt in the world was made to found a Homœopathic School; showing that by and by she would chew her food for herself. The molars came through in the year 1844, when the American Institute of Homœopathy was founded, of which Dr. C. Hering was by acclamation elected the first president; although he yielded this honor to Dr. Flagg, of Boston. Her eye and stomach-teeth appeared in the year 1848, when the inauguration of the first regular Homœopathic College took place in this City. You know full well, what troubles these teeth are apt to cause. For a long time the poor child had to suffer a good deal from convulsions; but she survived after all, and now enjoys, like the boy, a full set, with the exception of the wisdom-teeth, which even in the boy have yet to appear, for you must not forget, that in the life of nations a hundred years count but as days. Well, Gentlemen, it is you,

who may have to watch the cutting of the wisdom-teeth ! Climb on. The top of the ladder, as far as I can see, reaches into the coming centuries !

But, speaking without figure, we may indeed be proud of the progress which Homœopathy has made. From a few pioneers and a few adherents in this country; it has increased to four or five thousand physicians who at least *sail* under its flag, and to millions of adherents. By what means ? By hard work ! by having disseminated its truths ; by having made people the personal friends of these truths ; by having made them feel its beneficial influence upon their own welfare ; by having thus made people become identified with our cause. John Smith, formerly unknown, has now become a dear old friend ; well known and well beloved. And thus we have gained one factor, which is necessary to infection—the susceptibility of the soil. And I shall show you by an illustration which you have witnessed with your own eyes, how deeply it takes, if elements of their own kind, well developed and well defined hit upon elements of a similar character and tendency. I mean the Fair of our fair ladies in the interest of a Homœopathic Hospital. A year ago, from this stand, an appeal was made, and afterwards a call went out, and its idea spread little by little from threshold to threshold, irresistably, until finally, it had set into motion thousands of warm hearts and thousands of skillful hands to work deeds of kindness. And not only in this City and State was the call responded to, but also by New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, New York, Massachusetts and Ohio. *The Homœopathic Hospital has thus gained the start* and before many years pass by, it will be an accomplished

fact ; a grand monument to the ladies' exertions, an honor to Homœopathy and a blessing to thousands of our community.

Gentlemen, you are going from us, and soon you will be scattered near and far. Do not expect to gather fruit, where you have not sown seed ; you will succeed only in the degree in which you work for the cause. Take this illustration along with you ; and wherever you go, prepare the soil, and it cannot fail, that by your earnest and zealous endeavors Homœopathy will come out triumphantly over all the country.

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